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PCT App. No.: PCT/FI2004/050110

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings includes changes to FIGS. 1a and 2a. The first sheet, which includes FIGS. 1a, 1b, and 1c, replaces the original sheet including those figures. The second sheet, which includes FIGS. 2a and 2b, replaces the original sheet including those figures. In FIGS. 1a and 2a additional call-out numbers, found in the specification and in other views, have been added for clarity.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

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Claim Listing

1–15. (cancelled)

16. (new) Equipment for leading a web threading tail in a paper machine comprising:

a first cellular element having a first surface for conducting a threading tail in a direction of travel;

a second cellular element having a second surface sequential in the direction of travel with respect to the first surface, the second surface for conducting the threading tail, the first surface and the second surface defining a gap therebetween, the gap forming a nozzle directed over the second surface;

wherein the first cellular element and the second cellular element are sequential and are arranged in a staggered manner relative to each other to form the gap between the first cellular element and the second cellular element;

wherein the first surface is a wall of the first cellular element on a first side of the gap and the second surface is a wall of the second cellular element on a second side of the gap; and

wherein the first cellular element and the second cellular element are arranged to form a duct for distributing pressurized air from the first element to the second element and any further element.

17. (new) The equipment of claim 16 further comprising a plurality of sequential elements arranged to form the duct for distributing pressurized air, each sequential element forming a gap with a preceding element, the gap forming a nozzle directed over a surface of the sequential element.

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18. (new) The equipment of claim 16 wherein portions of the first surface form openings in the first surface, defining an exhaust zone, the openings in the first surface leading to a channel containing air of lower than atmospheric pressure, wherein the exhaust zone is positioned before the nozzle in relation to the direction of travel.

19. (new) The equipment of claim 16 wherein the first cellular element and the second cellular element are fitted detachably to each other using connector devices, for setting the size and shape of the gap to a selected configuration, by altering the mutual position and alignment of the first cellular element and the second cellular element.

20. (new) The equipment of claim 16 wherein the first cellular element and the second cellular element which form the duct are made of sheet metal with a cross-section of an essentially rectangular shape, wherein each of the first cellular element and the second cellular element has an end, and further comprising an end piece connected to at least one cellular element to thereby close said end.

21. (new) The equipment of claim 16, wherein the length of each of the first cellular element and the second cellular element in the direction of travel is 50–400 mm,

22. (new) The equipment of claim 16, wherein the length of each of the first cellular element and the second cellular element in the direction of travel is 100–300 mm.

23. (new) The equipment of claim 16 wherein after the gap in the direction of travel of the web threading tail, there is a lubrication zone in the second surface, for conducting air from inside the second cellular element between the web threading tail and the surface.

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24. (new) The equipment of claim 16, wherein, before the nozzle in the direction of travel of the web threading tail, portions of the first surface form an exhaust zone connected to a region of pressure below atmospheric for leading air through the first surface.

25. (new) The equipment of claim 17 wherein after the gap in the direction of travel of the web threading tail, there are portions of each element which form openings for conducting air from inside the cellular element between the web threading tail and the surface forming a lubrication zone, so as to allow air from inside the cellular element to flow between the web threading tail and the surface; and

wherein, before the nozzle in the direction of travel of the web threading tail, portions of the first surface form an exhaust zone connected to a region of pressure below atmospheric for leading air through the first surface; and

wherein the exhaust zone and the lubrication zone extend over the entire width of each element and the exhaust zone and the lubrication zone each have a length in the direction of travel which is 5–30 percent of a length of the element in the direction of travel.

26. (new) The equipment of claim 17 wherein each of the plurality of sequential elements is essentially identical and wherein in at least one wall of each element there is an opening which is filled with a member selected from the group consisting of: a connection to a supply of pressurized air, a support bracket for supporting the equipment from the paper machine, and a plug which closes the opening.

27. (new) The equipment of claim 16 wherein the gap defines a height of from 0.5–10 mm.

28. (new) The equipment of claim 17 further comprising a fan in air supplying relation to said plurality of elements.

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29. (new) The equipment of claim 28, wherein the fan is arranged in air supplying relation to a device in addition to said plurality of elements, and wherein the fan is arranged to be switched between said plurality of elements and said device.

30. (new) The equipment of claim 17, wherein the preceding element has portions forming openings in a surface to form an exhaust zone before the nozzle of each sequential element.

31. (new) The equipment of claim 30 wherein an exhaust channel, which is connected to the exhaust zone, is arranged in each element.

32. (new) Equipment for leading a web threading tail in a paper machine comprising;

a least one element having a first upper surface for conducting a threading tail in a direction of travel;

at least one channel mounted below selected portions of the first upper surface, the at least one channel being connected to a source of pressurized air;

portions of the first upper surface of the element which form first downward extensions which extend into the at least one channel to define blast openings in the upper surface, the downward extensions arranged to deflect air on to the upper surface; and

portions of the upper surface of the element forming second downward extensions, which do not extend into the at least one channel, the second downward extensions defining exhaust openings in the upper surface, the downward extensions arranged to conduct air away from the upper surface.

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33. The equipment of claim 32 further comprising a vacuum chamber mounted below the upper surface, wherein the second downward extensions define the exhaust opening into the vacuum chamber.

34. The equipment of claim 32 wherein the first downward extensions and the second downward extensions have similar shape but are arranged as mirror image structure.

35. (new) An apparatus for leading a web threading tail along a direction of travel in a paper machine, the apparatus comprising:

a first element having a conveying surface extending between two side walls, the first element having portions defining a pressurized passage; and

a second element having a conveying surface extending between two side walls, the second element having portions defining a pressurized passage, the second element being connected to the first element downstream of the first element such that the first element conveying surface is staggered from the second element conveying surface to define a gap therebetween, the gap defining a nozzle through which air introduced into the first element pressurized passage escapes to pass over the second element conveying surface as a directed air blast, to thereby transport the web threading tail from the first element conveying surface in the direction of travel of the web threading tail onwards to the second element conveying surface, the second element pressurized passage being in communication with the first element pressurized passage to allow the distribution of air inside the elements from one element to another.

36. (new) The apparatus of claim 35 further comprising portions of the first element conveying surface which define openings in the surface to define an exhaust zone upstream of the nozzle in the direction of travel of the web threading tail, for leading air away from the first element between the web threading tail and the first element conveying surface.

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37. The apparatus of claim 35 further comprising portions of the second element conveying surface which define a lubrication zone downstream of the gap between the first element and the second element conveying surfaces, the lubrication zone being comprised of openings which communicate with the pressurized passage of the second element to permit the escape of pressurized air therethrough.